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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/824,774	04/04/2001	Ikuko Inoue	205280US2	1433
22850	7590	09/10/2004	EXAMINER	
OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C. 1940 DUKE STREET ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314				LONG, HEATHER R
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				2615

DATE MAILED: 09/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	09/824,774	INOUE, IKUKO
Examiner	Art Unit	
Heather R Long	2615	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 April 2001. .

2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1, 2 and 5 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) 4, 5 is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on 04 April 2001 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) All b) Some * c) None of:
1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) •
2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION***Drawings.***

1. Figures 15, 16, and 17 should be designated by a legend such as --Prior Art-- because only that which is old is illustrated. See MPEP § 608.02(g).
2. The drawings are objected to because in Fig. 15 item 63 should be labeled "CLP" instead of "GLP".

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Specification

3. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.
4. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:
 - a. Page 5, line 17: change "the shading film 29" to –the shading film 29a--.
 - b. Page 14, line 34: change "films 14" to –films 14a--.Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1, 2, and 5 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Inoue et al. (U.S. Patent 6,211,509).

Regarding claim 1, Inoue et al. discloses an image pickup system comprising: MOS sensors arranged in an image pickup region of a semiconductor substrate (21) in the form of a matrix and having photoelectric transfer layers (22); a peripheral circuit part formed in a

region of the semiconductor substrate (21) except for the image pickup region and having a driving circuit for driving the MOS sensors and a signal processing circuit for processing output signals from the MOS sensors; and microlenses (29), formed on the photoelectric transfer layers (22) via a first insulating film (36), for condensing picture signals on the photoelectric transfer layers (22), wherein the driving circuit and the signal processing circuit in the peripheral circuit part are covered by a second insulating film (the insulation film surrounding the light shielding layer (28) preventing the light shielding layer from touching the vertical signal line), and the distance between the surface of the first insulating film (36) and the semiconductor substrate (21) is shorter than the distance between the surface of the second insulating film (the insulation film surrounding the light shielding layer (28) preventing the light shielding layer from touching the vertical signal line) and the semiconductor substrate (21) (Fig. 1A, col. 5, line 50 – col. 7, line 3).

Regarding claim 2, Inoue et al. discloses an image pickup system, wherein the peripheral circuit part has at least first through third wiring layers (32, 27, and 28), which are stacked via an insulating film (36 and the insulation film surrounding the light shielding layer (28) preventing the light shielding layer from touching the vertical signal line) to form a multi layer metallization structure (Fig. 1A, col. 5, line 50 – col. 7, line 3).

Regarding claim 5, Inoue et al. discloses an image pickup system, wherein the distance between each of the microlenses (29) and a

corresponding one of the photoelectric transfer layers (22) is substantially equal to the focal length of the corresponding one of the microlenses (29). It is inherent that the distance between each of the microlenses and a corresponding one of the photoelectric transfer layers is substantially equal to the focal length of the corresponding one of the microlenses in order to allow the light to focus properly on the photoelectric transfer layers.

Allowable Subject Matter

6. Claims 4 and 5 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: Prior art fails to teach or fairly suggest an image pickup system wherein a shading layer is formed in the image pickup region so as to be the same layer as the second wiring layer.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

a. Lee et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication 2004/0140564) discloses an image sensor, wherein the peripheral circuit part has at least

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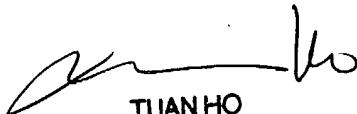
first through third wiring layers which are stacked via an insulating film to form a multi layer metallization structure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Heather R Long whose telephone number is 703-305-0681. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. - Thurs.: 7:00 am - 4:30 pm, and every other Fri.: 7:00 am - 3:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Andrew Christensen can be reached on (703) 308-9644. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

HRL
September 3, 2004



TUAN HO
PRIMARY EXAMINER